



A Breakfast Excursion

*The Bell Ringer
investigates the Nashville
brunch scene
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Investigating a Phenomenon

*Our take on Making a
Murderer
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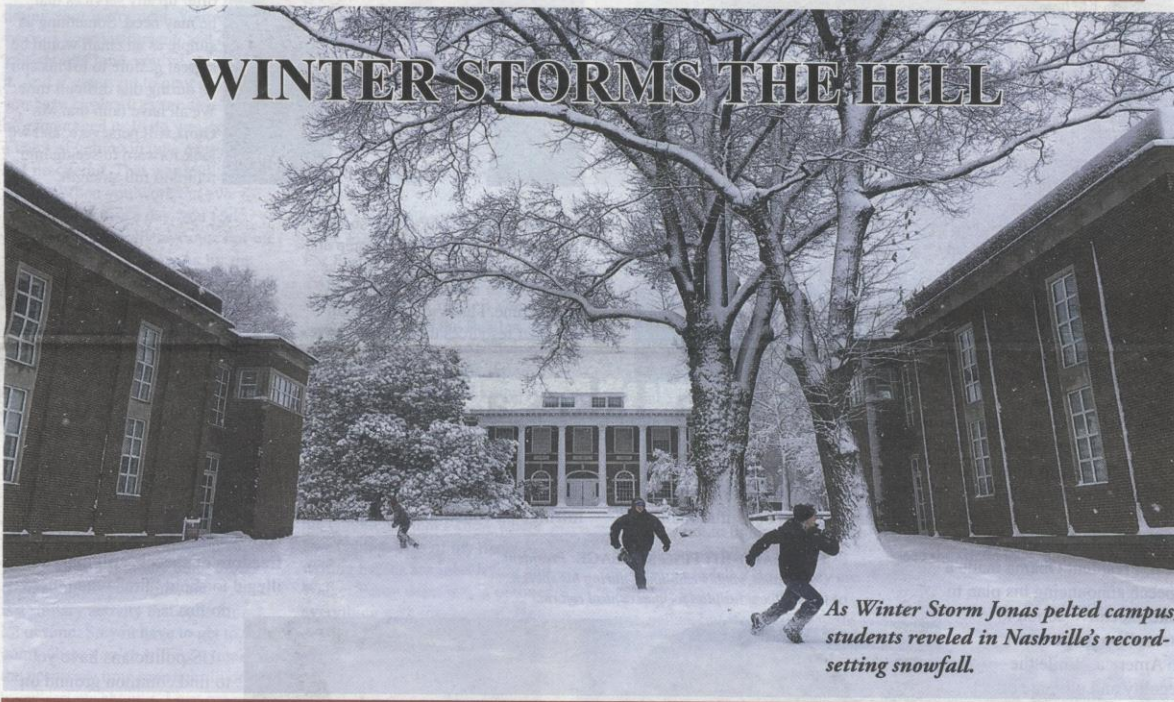


The Bell Ringer

Montgomery Bell Academy 4001 Harding Road Nashville, TN February 11, 2016 Vol. LXXII, No. 4



WINTER STORMS THE HILL



*As Winter Storm Jonas pelted campus,
students reveled in Nashville's record-
setting snowfall.*

Doctor Tarkington Makes it Big

By Werner Bradshaw
Young Thug Enthusiast

Becoming a recognized author is not an easy task. It takes years of hard work and creative development, and no one understands this reality more than Dr. Ed Tarkington. As his new novel *Only Love Can Break Your Heart* hits the shelves, *Bell Ringer* contributor Werner Bradshaw sat down with him to discuss his writing process and development as an author.

Werner Bradshaw: How did you get started as a writer?

Ed Tarkington: My senior year of high school I had two really influential

teachers. My AP English teacher was very encouraging and taught me how to love Shakespeare and Yeats and exposed me to contemporary fiction, especially John Irving, who has been a huge influence on me. I feel a connection with him since he is a wrestler and has characters who are wrestlers or wrestling coaches. So it helped me see a world in which the things that I cared about were important in stories. The other teacher who really influenced me was my theater director and acting teacher in high school. My senior year he decided that since we had won the state championship the year before, we should write a play instead of

performing one. So we split it up in assignments, each writing different little anecdotes, and I ended up writing and editing a bunch of them. I discovered that I really liked the process and was pretty good at it. That experience of actually writing something that was not published, per se, but performed, gave me the idea that I could write. So I began to flirt with the idea of writing at that point, but I didn't really get serious with writing for a long time.

WB: Do you remember any specific time when you started to write independently, as opposed to through school?

ET: The first real short stories I wrote were school assignments, but then around my junior or senior year of college I started trying to write novels just because I thought I'd like to publish a novel. I had started to take writing more and more seriously, but it was still writing for a class or a certain audience or a literary magazine I wanted to submit work to. I definitely didn't do anything really big outside of an academic context until my junior year of college. I had always been raised with this idea that you had to really read a lot and absorb a lot of

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Mr. Gioia Resils

By Mark Floyd
Lover of Peyton Manning

A little over two weeks ago, The Bell Ringer was fortunate enough to meet with Mr. Gioia and discuss his recent return to campus following his diagnosis of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. As always, Mr. Gioia was excited and responsive, and opened up about his exciting return to campus.

BR: How has your absence over Christmas break changed your perspective on life here on the Hill?

BG: It's a big wakeup call in terms of making you realize that you have all these routines that you enjoy, all the simple things that you take for granted, such as tying your shoes.

I'm doing better physically. I do have to go through some chemotherapy. You also realize that there are a lot of great people who can take care of things for you. You have to learn the grace of accepting people's care.

BR: Has your illness changed the way you look at MBA?

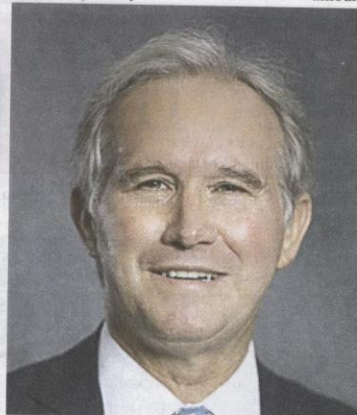
BG: It has given me a little time to reflect on my own role and what I want to try to achieve and how I could



utilize other people to help me with things. Then I could focus on the things that I really want to get done, and also allow them to do things that they'd enjoy.

BR: Is there anything that you would like to tell the students or community?

BG: It is incredibly humbling not to be able to do some of the things that you are used to doing and it is a good lesson, especially for males. You have



this false toughness as a male sometimes where you don't accept help and admit your vulnerabilities. You have a hard look at issues like faith, family, and time. I have to find strength and inner resources to help me. I have

to really listen to my body and not always try to rush back.

As a community it is vital that we continue our support for our headmaster. Mr. Gioia has done an immense amount of hard work to continue the long-standing traditions on the Hill, while also finding countless ways to improve it. As mentioned in the interview, he will soon be facing chemotherapy. While he undergoes his procedures, it is important that we continue to not only keep him in our hearts and prayers, but also offer up any services that he may need. Something as simple as an email would be a great gesture to lift his spirits during this difficult time. We all have faith that Mr. Gioia will persevere, and we look forward to seeing him return to full strength.

Obama Takes a Stand

By Philip Scholer
Young Ian

In early January of this year, President Obama made a speech announcing his plan to take executive action to strengthen gun control in America. While the legality and ultimate effect of this action may seem questionable to pundits, the Obama Administration proposed a clear plan they hope can reduce the number of gun-related deaths in America. The plan has four components: it requires all businesses that sell firearms to obtain a license and conduct background checks, ensures the effective and efficient enforcement of the gun safety laws that are already on the books, gives more help to those who are suffering from mental illness, and boosts gun safety technology.

But before the President could

officially announce this measure, his opposition remarked on the plan's lack of constitutionality

A HARD-HITTING MESSAGE: President Obama, visibly emotional during his speech, outlined his plan for gun control reform.



and its stripping of rights from law abiding citizens. Senator Ted Cruz even claimed that he would "take an eraser" and undo this executive action. This response was expected, as opponents of gun

control have traditionally asserted that universal background checks infringe on constitutional rights.

From the very beginning of his speech, President Obama strongly pressed for the protection of the Second Amendment. He also argued that, as with other amendments, practical restrictions

should be placed on its execution in order to protect the American people. For example, the First Amendment, though it guarantees freedom of speech, still makes it illegal to shout "fire" when there is no fire.

US politicians have yet to find common ground on how to keep Americans safe. We have invested trillions of dollars of government money in response to the 24 Americans killed on US soil in the last decade, but little government research has gone into investigating the cause of our previous decade's 280,024 gun-related deaths. While no member of congress wants to see fellow citizens gunned down in cold blood, many of our leaders have yet to take a stand on gun reform due to fear of suffering at the polls.

>>continued from front page

the best works before you began to try to write. But I definitely knew that this was something I wanted to try. I don't now feel that's strictly true. I feel that if you have a voice and have something to say, then you shouldn't be as self-conscious about it and just do it.

WB: Where do you find your motivation to write?

ET: Now it's just habit. I had a teacher in graduate school, Robert Owen Butler, who's a pretty famous writer, and he talked about the daily habit of writing—his metaphor was tuning your instrument. Your writing voice is your instrument, and once you get it in tune, you've got to play it. And if you want to play it well, you have to play it every day. What he encouraged us to do was develop a habit of getting in tune every day and practicing. That was really good advice. When you work out every day and you miss a day, you feel guilty and physically anxious. For me writing is the same way. As for the subjects and the material, every writer has to have an obsession. So I do have these obsessions, but I don't feel like my obsessions are particularly unique. For a writer, it's all about being able to articulate these obsessions, whereas other people find other outlets to deal with these obsessions.

WB: Where do you find time to write?

ET: The biggest thing about writing, especially in college, is finding time in your life to do it. When you're young, there's so many other things competing for your time, and writing is a solitary activity that calls for a lot of time. So you have to get to the point where you're willing to make the necessary time sacrifices in order to get serious about it. I just get up really early in the morning and try to go to bed early. I started a little more than five years ago when I realized, during the peak of wrestling season, that the only time I really had to focus on my writing was early in the morning, so I started trying to make myself go to bed around 9:30 and wake up around 3:30 and be ready to work around 4. Then that just became a habit. My goal was to write a thousand words a day. If you can do that, you're making good, steady, incremental progress. And that's writing five days a week, because I like to reserve the weekends to spend time with my family and do stuff at MBA.

WB: Having just published your first novel, what has surprised you about

the publication process the most?

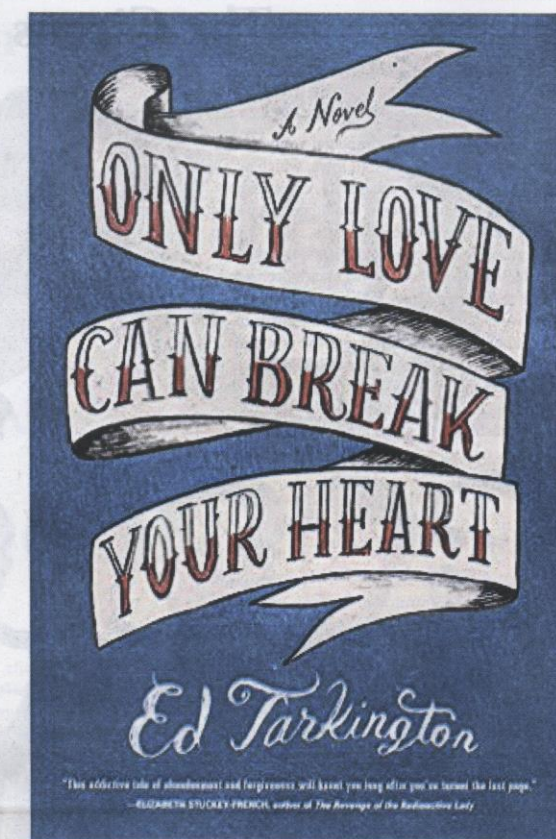
ET: Everything about it is new. I had heard stories in grad school about how things go, but the biggest thing that came as a surprise was how long it takes, because it takes time to edit it, copyedit it, do marketing research, and time the release so that your publication has the best chance to be successful, which is something I think my publisher does very well, but as a consequence there's a lot of waiting. Then once it's published, you're in this flurry that I'm in right now, where it seems like it's almost every five minutes I've got another message or request, which is both exciting and exhausting. And then in a couple of months, it'll just be over again until I'm finished with my next one.

WB: In your own words, what is *Only Love Can Break Your Heart* about?

ET: It's a cross between Cain and Abel, the prodigal son, "A Rose For Emily," *Helter Skelter*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *The Graduate*, with a soundtrack by Neil Young, Joni Mitchell, and the Beatles.

WB: When you began it, did you have a specific plan and know exactly what you wanted to write about?

ET: I knew where I wanted to start and I knew where I was heading. I wrote enough of an outline to give me confidence that I knew where I was going. Two of my main writing heroes are John Irving and Walker Percy. John Irving outlines everything with much detail. He is as detailed as you guys are when we ask you to outline a five paragraph theme. Walker Percy, on the other hand, would take a sheet of paper, sit on the couch, and just go. That's not to say that he did not put thought into what he was doing, because he was a very intellectual and cerebral writer. He just needed, in his mind, to feel that he was imagining and discovering the book as he was writing it. So I feel like I am in between the two. I feel like if you're going to write a plot, you have to actually plot out what you are going to do, but you have to give yourself sufficient freedom within that structure to allow for your imagination to shape the process, and so that you can feel that sense of discovery during the process. This freedom allows for great character development, because the characters, once fully formed, become so layered in your mind that they start



to make their own decisions; you can imagine the world in which these characters can act independently.

WB: How much do you think about themes when you write?

ET: I try not to think about themes or ideas much when I write; I'm just trying to tell a story. They are certainly something you want to internalize, but if you try to write about those ideas, you'll probably end up writing a story about ideas rather than real people. Ideas don't breathe; the people who have them breathe. I want my characters to feel like they are living, breathing people rather than vehicles of an idea. However, you definitely want to internalize your ideas and obsessions.

WB: What ideas did you internalize in *Only Love Can Break Your Heart*?

ET: As I've grown older, I have developed empathy for human frailty, something that has come along as I've matured, and something that I think has made me a much better teacher and mentor. In the

book, what you see is a lot of people who make some pretty bad choices and suffer the harsh consequences of those choices, but in the end, what my narrator does is develop an understanding of that human frailty and as a result he is able to forgive and see the world in three dimensions.

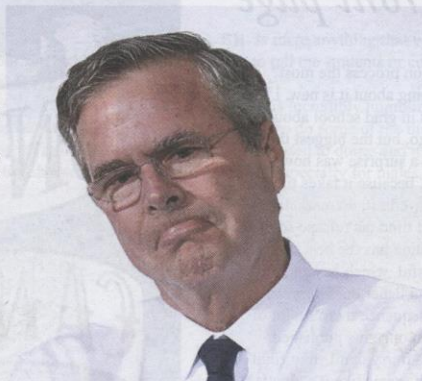


The Circus Marches On

By Andrew Kaplan
The Voice of Reason

The Iowa Caucus begins the actual voting phase of the presidential primaries. In Iowa, which uses a process unique from any other state, citizens show up to caucus for their favorite candidate in a public forum. The people debate candidates, and a winner in each party emerges. In recent years, the candidate selected in Iowa has not necessarily reflected who the nation elects later in the year, but regardless, as we head into this year's Iowa Caucus, a great deal of uncertainty surrounds the primaries in general, as it has become increasingly unclear who will win the first few states.

Following Iowa in the voting is New Hampshire. Interestingly, the polls are getting narrower



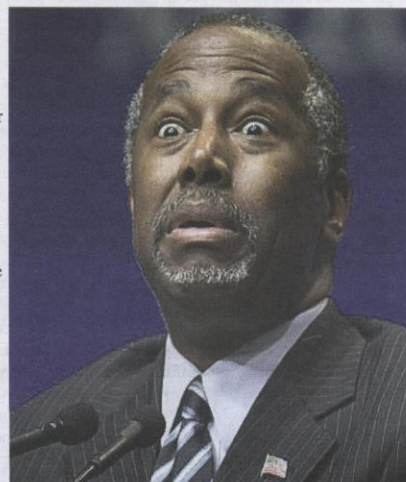
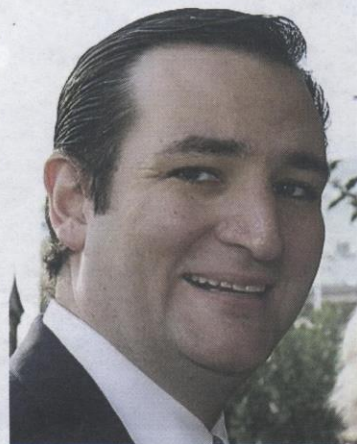
on both the Democratic and Republican sides of the ballot. Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton are neck-and-neck in Iowa, but in New Hampshire, Bernie holds a strong lead over Hillary. On the GOP side, Donald Trump still maintains a lead, with Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, Chris Christie and Ben Carson following behind.

Historically, polls for presidential primaries have been unreliable. While in the general presidential election there are only two candidates, and people are more involved in the actual voting process itself, in the primary, polls often get data from individuals who will not actually go out to the polls. For example, many of Trump's supporters are made up largely of a demographic that does not typically vote. This is not to say that they will not show out for their candidate, but there is certainly



a divide between telling a pollster who you support and the task of casting a ballot in their name. This issue is much more troublesome for candidates who are more radical on both sides of the aisle. For both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump (and Ted Cruz, for that matter), the viewpoints of these candidates appear grand in theory, but pragmatically are often more utopian in practice. Everyone thinks free college would be really cool, but many are unsure as to how Bernie Sanders plans to get this done. There are also people who think the notion of building a wall and deporting undocumented immigrants would be a rational idea.

So once rallying cries turn into a conversation in the car on the way to the voting booth, will Americans stick to their initial decision? There really is no good answer to this question, and the next few months will be crucial ones for the state of American politics.



Hot Take: Winterim

As the new year arrives on the Hill and we return to our classes, we are confronted with an age-old reality that draws both support and ire from the student body: we don't have Winterim. For the uninformed, Winterim is a program offered by Harpeth Hall that allows three weeks for students to take part in internship opportunities, trips abroad, and specific elective classes at Harpeth Hall. It is a complete alteration of their normal school schedule, as the girls do not return to their normal classes until late January.

But with all that being said, questions regarding Winterim's legitimacy still remain here on the Hill, with the main one being: how is it okay to take three weeks "off" of school? In this issue, Carter Lovvorn and Joseph Scowden look at both sides of the debate and try to make sense of this wide-ranging topic.

Anti-Winterim

By Carter Lovvorn
Resident Blue Devil

When discussing the differences between MBA and Harpeth Hall, one of the first thoughts that comes to the mind of many is Winterim. Comments on this controversial subject (at least around MBA) range from jealousy ("Why doesn't MBA have a Winterim?") to scrutiny ("Dude, Winterim is just a vacation").

After some careful research, I am here to offer my take on some of the negative connotations of Winterim.

Let's begin with the financial aspect of Winterim. Harpeth Hall does not pay for the often-extravagant experiences for their students. Upon interviewing a few HH friends of mine, however, I quickly understood that Harpeth Hall will pay for anyone who needs aid. This sounds a lot like claim of many colleges to "cover all of your financial needs."

The monetary aspect leads us to the next topic: how fortunate we are at MBA to have the Wilson Grant program.

I was lucky enough to go out of the country twice to study biology. Both of these opportunities were paid for by the Wilson family. Remarkably, the financial burden of these trips is not an issue for MBA families, and opportunities are earned by students' hard work rather than the depth of Mommy and Daddy's pockets. The only notable downside is the exclusivity of the MBA Wilson Grant.

Moving on, let's talk timing. Coming back from a three week winter break, I always feel as though I have lost a lot of the material I learned in the first semester of classes. Imagine if the break were six weeks. Not only do students lose knowledge; teachers lose three valuable teaching weeks. Why can't Harpeth Hall just move their experiences to the summer? A boy or girl could very easily do an internship with a charity or hospital during the summer, and have an extended period to do it, instead of just a three week stint. The only academic endeavor that this summer experience would interfere with is summer reading. But summer reading is an issue for another article.

While many MBA boys would beg me to talk about a lack in the legitimacy of all the programs involved, I actually believe in the legitimacy and fruitfulness of all the programs. I do not believe that the whole experience is just one big vacation. But I do see numerous flaws with the program that should be changed to make for a much better Winterim experience. Fixing the cost and timing issues could make for a more fruitful and less disruptive experience for our female counterparts.



Pro-Winterim

By Joseph Scowden
Fierce Opponent of Procrastination

Winterim at Harpeth Hall, contrary to common belief, is significantly beneficial to the Harpeth Hall curriculum, especially in the Upper School. Harpeth Hall offers a unique variety of classes and internships, some involving big groups and some small. Though there are the "fun" trips, e.g. scuba diving half-way across the world, there are countless other opportunities to study languages abroad and receive paid internships helping out the Nashville community.

The Winterim program, like the Wilson Grant program, allows Harpeth Hall students to expand their horizons, especially for the upperclasswomen. Hey, I would love to scuba dive for three weeks, or go to Spain, Haiti, or South Africa for a month, or even stay in Nashville for real world experience. And of course, being able to miss those first few weeks of school is always great.

The fact that Harpeth Hall gets the opportunity to go on these trips is an eye-opening realization of what modern curricula are merging towards: a more hands-on, experience-based type of learning rather than studying textbooks all day long. It is a type of teaching that I think should be accepted in more and more high schools around the nation. These experiences achieved through Harpeth Hall are worthwhile not only because of the memories made on the trips, but for the connections made with companies and organizations for internships and possible job opportunities. I tip my hat to the Honey Bears for going out on a limb for their students to have a more well-rounded high school experience.



Winterim is an integral part of these Honeybears' school year.

Some Good, Clean North Korean Fun

By William Bradford
Staff Infection

So how are you planning to spend your 32nd birthday? Maybe a small party and well-prepared dinner, surrounded by family and friends? That may sound like a pleasing evening, but apparently the concept didn't even cross the mind of one very special world leader, Kim Jong Un of North Korea. In addition to a world-class meal of Kobe steaks, cognac, and the blood of some "disobedient" North Korean government officials, Kim Jong Un treated himself to an extra course of mass destruction. Yes, I'm talking about the claims of North Korea testing a successful hydrogen bomb.

So how explosive is this bad boy? Well, an H-Bomb has the explosive force of about 4 million tons of TNT, so it's got some serious power. And if reports of the measurements are true, the explosion would have been so powerful that anything within a 15-mile radius would have been (A) instantly vaporized (hopefully Kim was hiding behind

a wall of snack foods) or (B) killed by third degree burns.

So North Korea claims to have this nice little toy. What does this mean for us humble Ameri-



cans? Well, let's not jump to conclusions. We don't even know if the "Hermit Nation" has an H-Bomb, considering that their history of being a "trustworthy" nation has had a tenure as brief as their supreme leader. North Korea claimed to have successfully tested the device at an under-

ground facility, although many of the details are shady and nonspecific.

Prompted by Kim's claims, countries such as Russia, the US, and even North Korea's ally, China, began meeting to discuss new restrictions on nuclear weapons. If the test had been successful, North Korea would be in violation of several international laws which draw clear guidelines for weapons of mass destruction, or WMD's.

Even so, many citizens of North Korea claim the test provided explosive results. One stone-faced man told a government-run news station that he "wanted to dance with joy" after hearing the country now had H-Bomb technology at its disposal. The camera then panned to huge crowds of people parading through the streets cheering for their supreme leader. Were they coerced into gathering to celebrate, or was this just part of Kim's plan all along? The specifics of such an event may remain unknown, but either way, that must have been one blowout of a birthday party.



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Letters to the Editor are encouraged, and can be delivered to the *Bell Ringer* office in the Lowry Building, the Faculty Advisors or the Editors, or sent to bellringer@montgomerybell.edu (simply type 'Bell Ringer' into the school email). These letters must be signed; *The Bell Ringer* neither publishes anonymous submissions of opinions or articles nor permits individuals to remain unidentified unless protected by other rules of confidentiality at MBA. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

The staff of *The Bell Ringer* prepares all copy at Montgomery Bell Academy. Tennessee/Gannett in Nashville, Tennessee, prints the paper.

Thoughts from the Editor



"The path of the righteous man is beset on all sides by the inequities of the selfish and the tyranny of evil men. Blessed is he who, in the name of charity and good will, shepherds the weak through the valley of the darkness, for he is truly his brother's keeper and the finder of lost children. And I will strike down upon thee with great vengeance and furious anger those who attempt to poison and destroy My brothers. And you will know I am the Lord when I lay My vengeance upon you."

- Ezekiel 25:17

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JOIN OUR TEAM!

Contact Nolan Spear, Joseph Scowden, Peter Taylor or Andrew Kaplan if you are interested.

The Great Nashville Standbys

By Joseph Scowden
The Most Prompt Editor

Nashville adds an average of 81 new residents every day. They come for various reasons: jobs, family, overall coolness, but, let's be honest, they're really coming here for the food. With these people come new restaurants, from fast food spots to high-end, luxurious eating palaces. Despite the huge influx of Nashville restaurants, there remain a very select few, those tried-and-true restaurants that keep our tummies happy, that I like to call The Nashville Core: the

original restaurants that supported Nashville through rough times and added to Nashville's greatness during the good times. These local spots, some under the radar and some in the spotlight, represent Nashville's finest and bring happiness to food lovers in the 615. They hold a special place not just in my heart but in the hearts of all Nashvillians, as they have time and time again amazed us with what they have done for this wonderful city. The following list includes restaurants I believe have, over the course of Nashville's history, added to the community and been revolutionary in the development of more incredible restaurants.

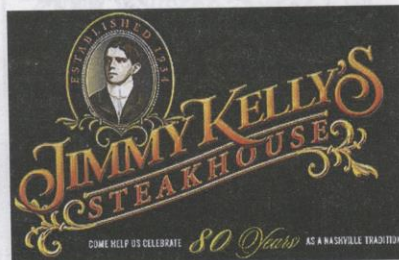
1. **Prince's Hot Chicken Shack:** The love of my life. I truly believe that Prince's is the sole reason for the huge boom Nashville is undergoing. Hot chicken is a Nashville staple, and Prince's is hot chicken Mecca. Out of towners who believe that they have visited Nashville without getting hot chicken are just

plain wrong, and the same goes for Nashvillians who have called themselves such without tasting the spicy glory of hot chicken. You cannot be a Nashvillian without eating hot chicken, plain (pun intended) and simple. Prince's has single-handedly launched a food revolution in the 615, with more and more hot chicken spots popping up left and right. If anyone reading this has not had hot chicken, please put down this paper and drive to the nearest hot chicken place to discover true love.

2. **Capitol Grille:** Moving onto the high-end places, Capitol Grille is in the bottom floor of the world famous Hermitage Hotel. Along with having one of the most architecturally-renowned men's restrooms in the history of restrooms, Capitol Grille pleases any type of eater. Their menu, from high quality fish to Southern comfort food, welcomes any hungry food-lover with open arms. Its history, complemented beautifully by its service and grub, makes Capitol Grille a fantastic spot for those seeking a fancy-schmancy dining experience.

3. **Jimmy Kelly's:** One of the oldest steakhouses in Nashville, Jimmy Kelly's is owned and operated by the historic Kelly family of MBA and Father Ryan (kin to the prestigious John Kelly, class of '16). Jimmy Kelly's opens their doors to any person who wants to eat, and I mean eat. Their huge portions of steak overwhelm even the hungriest customer in the best way possible. You must be careful, though, because people who go there must only get one appetizer. Don't fill up completely on their delicious pancakes or onion rings. The steaks, always ridiculously moist, cut like butter and melt in your mouth like a hot fudge sundae. But food aside, the history at Jimmy Kelly's is second to none. Whether it is a huge meal with your family or a date with that special lady, Jimmy Kelly's will satisfy any appetite. Jimmy's Kelly's has propelled the steakhouse competition in Nashville, and has stayed on top of the restaurant pool.

These three restaurants have supported Nashville and given it its identity. Without them, Nashville would not be as amazing it is now, and I would be a very, very sad man.



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SPECIAL EVENTS

A Tour of the Nashville Brunch Scene

Biscuit Love Amazes

By Joseph Scowden
Big Man on Campus

In the wee hours of the morning of January 17th, I, Joseph Scowden, along with the illustrious Drew Davis and our fearless editor Nolan Spear, approached Biscuit Love with crusty eyes, cold toes, and empty stomachs. As we were the first customers of the day in this up-and-coming biscuit house, we were able to fully embrace the quality of the restaurant without a rush. From the moment we entered the door, one question dominated our minds: "What should we order?" There are so many good options at Biscuit Love, but almost all dishes revolve around their massive, fluffy biscuits.

We ordered three glasses of their freshly-squeezed lemonade, along with cups of coffee. The lemonade was the absolute definition of fresh, and we knew this place meant business when we saw waiters placing fresh oranges into a machine that dispensed their orange juice. The coffee was the perfect temperature and contained a delicious hint of vanilla. While sipping on these superb drinks, we ordered two starters: the "Bonuts" and the "Chronic Bacon." The "Bonut," Biscuit Love's version of a doughnut hole, is basically fried biscuit dough stuffed with lemon custard and placed on



CULINARY ART: Both the "Bill Neal" and the "Bonuts" are pictured on the left—some of the best fare Biscuit Love has to offer.

top of blueberry compote. It not only warmed up our hearts, but also was a delicious first taste of what was about to come.

Following those pastry delights, the Chronic Bacon stopped our warmed hearts in the best way possible. The bacon was candied on the outside but mixed spicy with sweet by being covered in black pepper. It was one of the most unique breakfast dishes I have ever had, and I seriously don't know where my taste buds would be without it.

Now on to the main courses. As the newbie and the "mainstream" tester, Drew ordered the first and most popular item on the menu, "The East Nasty." Voted the "Best Sandwich of 2015" by the magazine *Bon Appetit*, "The East Nasty" consists of a fried chicken breast, aged cheddar, and sausage gravy in a warm biscuit blanket. Drew did not say a word for about 10 minutes after eating it, in sheer awe of its intoxicating flavor. It is safe to say that Drew enjoyed his meal.

Wanting to go less mainstream, Nolan Spear '16 ordered what the waiter called "the most flavorful thing you will ever eat," "The Bill Neal." One of the only items on the menu that lacked a biscuit, "The Bill Neal" is basically shrimp and grits on steroids. Jacked up with Cajun flavor, covered in fresh shrimp, mushrooms, and slices of bacon, the dish was too much to be finished by Nolan, but he made sure to leave with its remnants in a to-go box.

Finally it was my turn to order. Being "the hot chicken guy," of course I had to go with the famous "Princess," a hot chicken sandwich on a biscuit. But after a few hushed words with our waiter, I revised my order. For he informed me about a "secret menu" item, "The Nasty Princess." A combination of the East Nasty and the Princess, this incredible sandwich has everything a hot chicken man could ask for. It consists of a piece of hot chicken, sausage gravy, and a fried egg, all inside of a biscuit. Truly a culinary masterpiece.

All in all, Biscuit Love is a culinary wonderland. It is authentic, run efficiently, the food is made with the utmost care. Absolutely worth getting up for. Our trip was an incredible experience filled with fresh food, hot chicken, and warmed hearts.

Wendell Smith's Remains a Standby

By Drew Davis
Staff Infection

In my eating career, I have found that there are just some restaurants out there that stay with you no matter what. After my visit a few weeks ago, I could honestly say that Wendell Smith's is one of those places. It is a small joint on Charlotte Avenue, perfect for an informal meal. Wendell's is very conveniently located, there's a lot of seating, and the prices are reasonable.

When *The Bell Ringer* paid a visit, we were amongst a lunch crowd that was ordering many of Wendell's famed meat-and-three items. But though it was a little late in the day, we had arrived with the intention of eating some of their famed breakfast items. After some initial decision-making, John Kelly and I decided to order bacon-egg-and-cheese omelets, complete with sides of house fries and creamed corn. My omelet was hot, fresh, and delicious; I could seriously tell that some heart and soul had gone into the creation of this breakfast dish.

Upon viewing our outstanding order, Nolan Spear and Joseph Scowden could not hold themselves back. Nolan ordered a western omelet filled with peppers, bacon, and onions, and chose sides of green beans and home fries. When asked about the quality of his dish, Nolan only shook his head and smiled, calling it "a master course in well-prepared culinary excellence."

J Scow, our food connoisseur, went all-out. He also ordered a western omelet, along with a stack of hotcakes and toast with jelly. We ate in silence for several minutes, and the consensus was that our meal was top-notch. But it wasn't just the food that impressed. The service at Wendell's is fast and friendly despite their busy rush hours. There's a friendly banter between servers and loyal customers that gives the place a genuine atmosphere of a classic diner. Our meal provided quite a bang for its buck; each of our plates was piled high with food at a reasonable low price. All in all, while at first glance it may appear to be small and unorganized, Wendell Smith's is a truly reliable and delicious breakfast establishment.



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Brown's Diner: More than Just a Restaurant

By John Fioravanti
Spiritual Guru

It seems that new restaurants offering stimulating food experiences are popping up everywhere around Nashville. Just as Nashville as a whole is expanding and reinventing itself, so is the food scene.

But what about the established eateries? Restaurants that define our city and are embedded in its very soul. Restaurants from the 1920's? Name one... Can't do it, can you? I don't blame you. I couldn't either before visiting Brown's Diner, because that era has passed. Its existence is in the foundations of the Nashville we know as a city that is up and coming with potential.

But we forget that Nashville is very old, with roots in a French

wobbly wooden chairs made for an oddly comforting experience.

The menu was simple, laminated with only one side. With over half of the volume occupied by listings of side orders and beer selections, the variety at Brown's is nothing to boast about.

Our waiter, Sarah Drummond, took our order: a burger, fries, and chili for me, and a chicken sandwich, fries, and the seasonal soup for my dad.

After ordering, I looked around the diner colored by the same lights as the bar, but this time with ceiling fan lamps and Budweiser sconces. The main dining area is a large rectangular shaped room, the walls littered with more football decorations and neon signs advertising beer. Behind me was the kitchen window and service door. Peering in, I could see fresh onions as

well as the grill. Fresh onions...a good sign.

One of four parties, my father and I were waiting for our soups when we met a man by the name of Clay Whitelaw. An elderly entrepreneur, currently the owner of

Art Gallery, Clay has been a customer at Brown's Diner for over 40 years. When I asked if he's seen great change in the restaurant, to my surprise he said, "It hasn't changed at all." To him, Brown's has always been an "old-timey" diner with "cheeseburgers made by hand." "There's nothing fancy about the place," Clay went on to say, "It may seem rough and unorganized, but it truly is polished and very special."

After talking to Mr. Whitelaw, I returned to my table where I was met with my chili. On top of the chili was a slice of cheese covered in those fresh onions I had seen. An unorthodox way to top chili, but nevertheless I took a bite. It was solid chili. Hearty, heavy on the meat and beans. The onions cut through the taste of the chili and cheese, adding their own flare. The vegetable soup was of course a very different flavor from the chili. It could use a little more depth in the flavor, but both were warm and comforting, especially with the recent snowstorm awaiting us outside.

The main event of the night, the burger and fries, arrived soon after. The burger started with a plain white bun, then a tomato, a full cross-section of an onion, the patty with cheese, followed by your choice of



SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE: Brown's is well known for its laid-back atmosphere and timeless menu.

condiments. The pickles were on top of the bun with a toothpick through the middle of them pinning them into the burger. Once again, a strange way to stack a burger. The main course tasted very homemade. Flavorful, a little heavy on the onions and perhaps just a little dry, but just about the closest burger to my grandfather's that I have ever eaten at a restaurant. The fries were crispy and tasted even better with added salt.

When Sarah had returned our finished meals to the kitchen and brought the check, I asked her how long she had been working there. Only a few months, which seems normal, but apparently to the diner's standards she is incredibly inexperienced. She explained to me that the rest of the waiting staff has been working at Brown's for over twenty years. I was shocked. Having a few waiters with that kind of commitment is rare, but a whole staff? Now that is unheard of.

Sarah helped me realize what she had learned: Brown's Diner is not a



restaurant. It's an institution where a community has dined for eighty-nine years. The restaurant's survival was strange to me at first. How could a cheap, run-down diner outlast most of its generation?

The answer is in the question. Brown's brand name is cheap and easy, and it has been its whole existence. What's more, both the staff and the customers of Brown's know this. They revel in it, and it's that honesty and the comfort found that makes Brown's feel like home.

Strangely, I feel drawn back to Brown's Diner. Maybe it was the people I met, or the atmosphere that made me feel as if I was tucked away in a small town's diner, the one and only place everyone meets after work.

When I called to make sure I got some of their information right, I heard the sound of a band on its final number and the chatter of a busy bar. Those sounds felt familiar, and they made me happy--the same happiness I felt leaving Brown's that Wednesday night. I know that I have to go back.



trading post in 1710 and its official establishment seventy-four years later.

So if Nashville has reinvented itself, why hasn't Brown's Diner? Why has it not been buried with the past? This was the question I asked myself when I stood outside its door on a snow-fallen Wednesday night.

As I walked in, I was met with that very question again, but this time with the aroma of sizzling beef patties filling the air. The atmosphere was dark with wooden floors, ceilings, and walls sunken in their places with the passage of time. To the left there was music equipment, packed away for another night. To my right was the length of a bar that wrapped around to the main dining hall. The bartender was wiping down around his solitary customer. Neon signs, holiday string-lights, and the evening's news gave the only light in the room: a glowing, pulsing light that was just enough to fill each corner that had its own adornment, whether that be a dusty picture from the diner's past or football memorabilia. How could this place have lasted for over eighty years? Why is a dark sports bar so special?

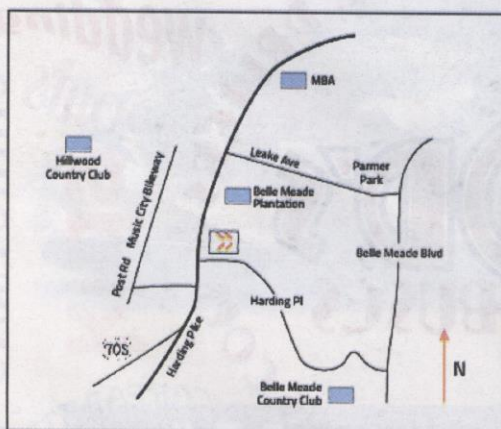
My dad and I were shown to the table. The tabletop, red Formica outlined by a wooden border, and the

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Ice Pups Finish Regular Season Undefeated

By Jack Malone
Rink Rat

After a strong close to the 2014-2015 season and near-victory in the state championship, the Big Red Hockey team entered this current season with a win-now attitude. The school invested more money into the program, which allowed the team to have summer workouts at a hockey training facility located in Franklin. The summer program and ice sessions gave the team the opportunity to bond as a team and establish continuity heading into the season.

Head coach Tim Kovick attributes the team's fast growth to these summer workouts, stating, "The boys skated all summer long in a training facility in Franklin, and that hard work has proven to be fruitful."

The team's preseason started off a little shaky, as the Big Red started out with a bad loss to Father Ryan and then another loss to Ravenwood. The team knew that they would need to step up their game in order to start the season on a strong note. Soon play turned around and the Big Red went undefeated over the next three games of their first tournament and eventually losing a tough semifinal match to Ravenwood. However, this solid run was enough to place the Big Red in the top division of GNASH, allowing them to play the highest level of competition and fully grow as a team.

The regular season started off hot as the

boys earned big wins over Hendersonville and Father Ryan. The Big Red didn't stop there and entered a tough match with Ravenwood sitting at 5-0. Both teams were undefeated and looking to become the first place team in the league. This game ended in a tie after no winner could be decided in a shootout. For the next four games, the

but the Big Red was one point ahead of Ravenwood in the standing. Whoever won this game would win the GNASH Cup.

The team knew that this one would not be easy. Coach Tim Kovick said to the team before the game, "All year we have been taking quizzes to lead us up to the test, which we have been studying all

go down without a fight, and tied it up heading into the third period. But Robert Cowan would not be stopped, and scored on a pass from Blake Robinson to put the Big Red up 3-2. 30 seconds later, Ellis Moore forced nearly every player on the Ravenwood back-line to grab at their ankles as he sniped a shot to put MBA up 4-2.

In the end, the Big Red won the game 4-3, winning the GNASH Cup and earning the number one seed going into the State Tournament. This was the first Cup for the Big Red in eight years.

A very excited Coach Deutsch stated, "They have to accomplish something that has never been done in the 30 year history of MBA hockey - win the league championship and be the #1 seed going into the playoffs. I am proud of what they have accomplished so far and am optimistic about their future."

The Big Red finished the regular season 13-0-1, with the only tie coming against Ravenwood. It has been a great season so far and the Big Red will look to have a superb performance in the State Tournament.

Come out and support the boys over the next two weeks as they look to make a return trip to the Bridgestone Area. Skate Red Skate!



Big Red and Ravenwood would be tied for first place, until Ravenwood tied a weak team which shocked the standings.

But the season was not over yet. MBA's toughest test was soon to come, in the form of a game against Ravenwood for the regular season championship. Coming into the game, both teams were undefeated

season for. This is it."

The game was tight from the start, until about seven minutes into the game Jacob Kovick ripped a slapshot into the upper right corner to open the scoring. Then, about two minutes later, Robert Cowan stole the puck and fired a shot to put the Big Red up 2-0. Ravenwood would not

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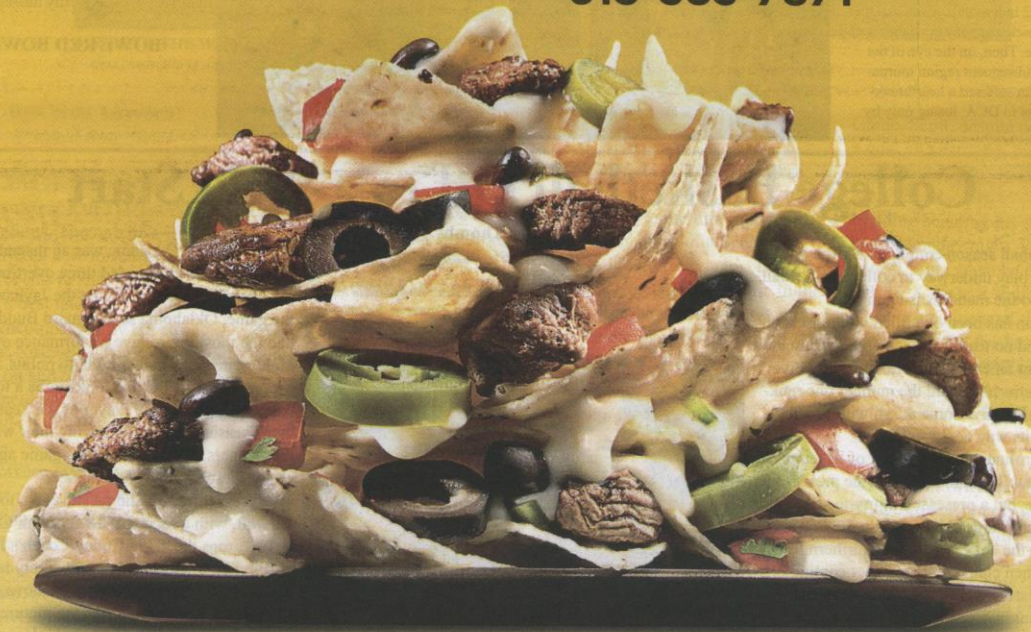
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SCOTT PORTIS, CLASS OF '84
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Bowling Team Defies Expectations

By the Professional Bowling Association

It took an excruciating 16-11 loss to JPII in the 2014-15 District tournament to change the MBA Bowlers' outlook for the 2015-16 season. Expectations were high as the team returned the entire starting lineup from last year. All members had one goal in mind: win the 2016 TSSAA State Championship. When the first match of the season resulted in an 18.5-8.5 loss to Father Ryan, however, the squad needed a wakeup call. They knew that while they had the talent to reach new heights, they still needed to come together as a team if they were going to advance in the standings.

Led by senior captain Jackson Wooten and experienced senior bowlers Jamie Payne, Grayson Fettroll, and Brinton Hoover, the team rebounded with a 10-1 streak after that first loss. This run included avenging losses from the previous season against Ensforth and JPII, while also beating defending champion Friendship Christian, and perennial powerhouse DCA. These wins were due to the team coming together as one unit rather than 12 individuals. Each member was able to pick someone up if they had a tough game. Then, on the eye of the district and subsequent region tournament, the team suffered a heartbreaking 14-13 loss to DCA, losing only by

21 total pins. MBA would have to go to through both tournaments if they wanted a shot at a state title.

The boys entered the districts with a 12-4 record and the #1 seed. With convincing 19-8 wins that included beating rival Ensforth for a 3rd time and USN, the MBA Bowlers only needed one more win to reach the team portion of the state tournament. They headed to Smyrna on January 12, and defeated a Knoxville Webb team 22-5, not receiving, but earn-

ing, a spot in the state tournament. Before the team portion, senior captain Jackson Wooten and sophomore vice-captain Ben Coulthard were lucky enough to head to the individual state tournaments. These two made MBA history as they were the first pair of bowlers to advance to state. With the entire team supporting, Jackson finished with a very strong 9th place performance, only 21 pins out of a spot in the finals. (21 was not a kind number to the MBA squad this year).

Ben gained valuable experience for his upcoming years. While he finished 23rd out of the 24 participants, he gained confidence for any possible return trip. The team had to wait a weekend to return to compete as a team due to snow, but they returned with a chance to beat the #1 seed, McCallie. They opened the match strong and let McCallie know they meant business. At the end of the second game, they even had a 9-7 lead! However, McCallie caught fire in the first few frames as a team in the third game, and took all but one match in the third game, giving them the victory 17-10. While the result was certainly not what anyone wanted, everyone was proud of the result. Every team on the lanes that day believed MBA had won due to the energy they had the entire match, even when things were bleak. McCallie's coach even stated that MBA had given them their best match of the year.

While the season is now done, the bowlers look forward to the future, with three starters having two years of experience and two others having bowled well this year. We would be remiss to not mention the seniors, too. They took MBA Bowling from a club sport to almost winning a state title. They will be greatly missed.

A SQUAD UNITED: The Big Red Bowlers rallied behind strong senior leadership and finished the season on a high note.



BOWL RED BOWL!

College Basketball Off to a Wild Start

By Palmer Thombs
Fan of Every Team

With football season coming to a close and conference play underway in college basketball, the march to the madness is upon us.

The season has been one filled with upsets on the road, and no team has been able to truly lock dominant for an extended period of time. Five different teams have held the number one ranking in the AP Poll at some point, with possibly another on its way next week.

North Carolina, returning most of its team from last year's squad, started as the preseason number one, but a preseason injury to star senior guard Marcus Paige sidelined him the first six games, and the Tar Heels fell at Northern Iowa. Kentucky then claimed the top spot coming off of an impressive win in the Champions Classic over Kansas. Even with all of their young talent, the Wildcats failed to follow in the path of last year's team and lost on the road to a talented but often dysfunctional UCLA team. Meanwhile, the Michigan State Spartans slowly climbed their way up the polls from their preseason 13th ranking to find themselves sitting atop the polls after the fall of Kentucky. The Spartans, led by senior Denzel Valentine, got by with some tight wins and avoided upsets until they lost on the road to Iowa four weeks into their reign atop the polls.

The Jayhawks of Kansas then took over the top spot. Led by senior Perry Ellis, the Jayhawks recently defeated Big 12 foe Oklahoma in a battle between the number one and two

TWO STUDS: LSU's Ben Simmons and Oklahoma's Buddy Hield have established themselves as two of the nation's best players at this point in the season.



ranked teams. The game was an instant classic, and the Jayhawks needed three overtimes to put away the Sooners. While the Jayhawks won the game, Oklahoma senior guard Buddy Hield had the most impressive performance of the night going for a career high 46 points. Hield is averaging 26.1 PPG and looks to be a top candidate to take home the Player of the Year award at the season's close. Following their win over the Sooners, Kansas dropped a game against the pesky West Virginia Mountaineers.

At press time, Oklahoma sits at the top of the AP Poll, with a record of 18-2. North Carolina, at 19-2, tops the "USA Today Coach's Poll," creating an imbalance that will surely rear its head come tournament time. Villanova, Maryland, and Xavier remain in the picture as well, and all three times will likely look to make a statement as conference tournaments draw closer and closer.

If the trends of this season continue, there is no telling who will be atop the polls next week. Even with the craziness of the season thus far, the madness still looms off in the distance and a number of teams have a chance to make their mark on history.

NHL All-Star Game Impresses League-Wide



WORTH THE WAIT: The All-Star Game was a rousing success, proving to fans from all across the nation that Nashville is an established hockey town.

By Carter Lovvorn
Resident Blue Devil

The 2016 Honda NHL All-Star Game exceeded all previous expectations. The one-of-a-kind event used a new format and varied events to showcase the league's best talent, all while being encompassed by the strong spirit of Nashville. The diverse events on and off the ice created a spectacular weekend for NHL fans and all 48 NHL players and coaches.

The off-ice events got off to a hot start when Matt Duchene of the Colorado Avalanche joined Lee Brice on stage to play a guitar solo during his Friday night performance. The next day, the red carpet event blew away all expectations, as tens of thousands of local Preds fans and a few traveling fans packed Demonbreun St. to the brim to cheer on and meet their favorite players.

P.K. Subban of the Montreal Canadiens was amazed by the way the city had risen up for the event and was quick to let the fans know that although they are underrated by some, he sees them as some of the most passionate in the league. The hometown captain Shea Weber picked up after Subban by saying that the fans are "in [his]

opinion the best in the league, and definitely the loudest."

After the red carpet, the players in Skills Competition wowed the crowd with dazzling moves and rocketed slap shots, mostly from Shea Weber. Weber brought the fans to their feet with his blistering 108.1 MPH shot, .7 away from Zdeno Chara's all-time record. Dylan Larkin (Detroit) broke Mike Gartner's fastest skater record that had been standing

for 20 years. The Breakaway Challenge is always a crowd favorite. The event featured Matt Duchene in a cowboy hat, James Neal (Nashville) bringing out Dierks Bentley to help out on his attempt, and Pekka Rinne (Nashville) using a guitar as a goalie stick.

The two top vote-getters were P.K. Subban and Brent Burns (San Jose). Burns brought his son out onto the ice for his first attempt and then "channeled his inner Chewbacca" on his second attempt. P.K. Subban won the event with his Jagr salute (If none of this makes sense to you, look up 2016 Breakaway Challenge on

YouTube.)

The final day featured a 3-on-3 tournament between divisions. While the hometown Central team went down in the first round, the fans got behind John Scott and his Pacific division team. The Pacific defeated the Atlantic in the championship game 1-0, rewarding the Pacific players with a cool \$1,000,000 all around.

A few headlines from the weekend:



Patrick Kane (Chicago) won me over: I was quick to boo Kane upon seeing him on the ice for the first time during the weekend. However, as the weekend went on,

I saw that Kane was playing along with the fans. He tried to convince the fans that he was on their side. He did just that by scoring a goal for the Central division in the game. I still hate the Blackhawks, but Patrick Kane is OK in my book.

John Scott for President: Who is John Scott? Well, he plays in the minor leagues, but through a random, yet very convincing, fan vote, he was voted into the All-Star

Game. Scott, despite not scoring a goal all year long, put up two goals in the tournament and win MVP. He also had every fan in the building chanting his name by the end of Sunday night. Part of Scott's appeal came when he challenged Patrick Kane to a "fight" after Kane scored his goal. I wouldn't be surprised if the Predators sign John Scott within the next week.

A few reasons why the game was such a success:

- The downtown location of Bridgestone Arena gave players and fans opportunities to enjoy the city.
- The fans showed out. The city was turned gold, and Preds fans brought the thunder.
- The country music theme was something that everyone could enjoy, and it gave the weekend some true flavor.

From a long-time Predators fan, I would like to congratulate the team and the city on an amazing weekend that showed North America how great of a hockey city Nashville truly is and how much passion its fans have.

The Wright Stuff

By Ben Coulthard
Staff MVP

Only about a week after his band released a surprise album, *Mr. Misunderstood*, to the public, *The Bell Ringer* had the privilege of interviewing Craig Wright, the live drummer for Eric Church. Mr. Wright has been playing with Eric Church for 10 years, and he is proud of their run of successful records. Mr. Wright sat down with *The Bell Ringer* and answered questions that ranged from road trips with his guys to the development of his music career.

BR: How did your music career begin? When did you start playing music?

CW: When I was 8, my family moved to Nashville from Atlanta, and I started taking drum lessons when I was 10. I already knew that I wanted to be a musician because I had seen KISS on TV when I was about 8. I went and bought a couple of their records and I thought they were really cool. That exposure really got me interested in music. After that, I played saxophone in the concert band from 4th grade until my graduation from high school. I played the drums in the marching band and also learned how to play the piano. When I was 18, I joined a band and went to England for about a month. At this time, I realized that this might be a cool way to make a living, so I kept plugging away, auditioning for different gigs. When I was 20, I auditioned for Steve Earle, who at that time was enjoying some success with his song "Copperhead Road," and I joined up with him. That was it. I haven't had a real job since then.

BR: How did you begin playing with Eric Church?

CW: I knew Eric's producer, Jay Joyce. He called me one day and said, "There's a new guy getting ready to do a record for Capitol Records and they want to hear some demos." Jay's a rock and roll producer and he said Eric reminded him of Steve Earle, so he asked if I wanted to do some demos. Of course I wanted to! So I played on those five or six demos, and I think three of them got turned into masters. That led to me working on "Sinners Like Me," Eric's first record. When it came time for him to go on the road and start

opening for bigger artists, they asked if I wanted to come along, and I said yes. I thought maybe it'd be a year's worth of work, but now it's turned out to be a ten-year gig.

BR: After joining Eric Church and the band, what has been your favorite and least favorite part of having a career in music?

CW: There's a lot of great stuff to it, but also some negatives as well. The money isn't always great and that's tough, but the payoff is that you almost get to be your own boss, and as long as you're willing to work and persevere, good things will hopefully come your way. It's a hard thing to do for a living, but it's really cool to hear yourself on the radio or to play in front of 20,000 people.

BR: Is there any difference for you as a drummer from playing in a studio against playing in a live venue? Which do you like more?

CW: I like both for different reasons. I like the studio because you get to be creative and come up with your own take on a new song and you have more control over what your ultimate sound is going to be. In a live situation, especially in arena-size venues, they all sound the same. I do love playing in little clubs, though, because they each have their own sound to them. It's fun to play in front of an audience and see people rocking it out, but it's also really fun to get to sleep in your own bed at night and not have to be on the road.

BR: What has been your favorite venue to play?

CW: I'd have to say the two, as far as



milestone gigs, would be playing Bridgestone Arena and playing Madison Square Garden. Selling out and setting an attendance record in our own hometown arena was pretty cool, but selling out the Garden wasn't bad either.

BR: With *The Outsiders* album and the tour, has it been cool to see people listen to country music that wouldn't have otherwise, or even to be able to change someone's life who came to the show?

CW: I imagine and hope that that happens in some way, especially when you're younger, because that's where music hooks you. It's like when you're in the high school age, songs on the radio that you discover for the first time can really move you and make you feel like an artist on your own. If anybody digs what I've done and wants to learn music, I think that's awesome, especially because we make a living off people coming to see us, and they don't have to come see us, and I'm always thrilled when someone shows up to a gig. It's awesome.

BR: What advice would you give young musicians who might want to pursue music?

CW: If you want to do it for a living, you better really want to do it for a living. This town makes people come and go. It can

be really difficult, but I'll say for one, be on time and two, be prepared. Don't show up and just half way know your stuff. Just keep trying! If you really want to do it and people keep calling and think you're good, chances are you are good enough to keep playing.

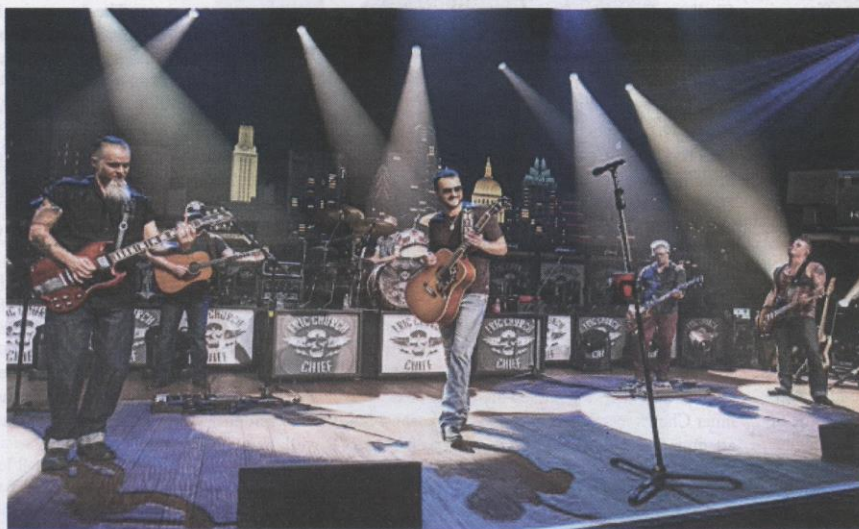
BR: Being in a group on the road, how important is it to stay focused and positive, and can you compare it to something like a class at MBA?

CW: Especially for us, it's 8 or 9 people on the bus, and you've gotta be able to get along and work together as a team. Other road crews say how cool it is to be around us because they say we're like a family. We've got each other's backs, and we'll let you know if you're messing up, but we also let you know if you're doing a good job. Rarely do we have any problems, and we all like each other. We laugh, make fun of each other, give each other a hard time when necessary, but I can honestly say those guys are my brothers and I'm an only child.

BR: What have been your favorite songs to play all time, the band's list, and from the new album (*Mr. Misunderstood*)?

CW: I really liked playing "The Outsiders" on this last tour because every night, I was 50 feet in the air in the video cube and being lowered to the ground when

the band kicks into the intro on the song. That was definitely my favorite part of the night, getting everybody on their feet. If you want to feel like a rock star, try getting lowered 50 feet with a drum kit playing. From the new record, we played "Mr. Misunderstood" live at the CMA Awards in front of everyone, but I imagine playing "Knives Of New Orleans" and "Chattanooga Lucy" will be fun too. We'll just have to see.



The Fanboy Awakens

By Peter Taylor
The Foreigner

December 2015. I went into the movie theater with high expectations. I was going to watch the long-awaited continuation of the world's most beloved movie franchise. It was the next chapter of a saga fans have been waiting for years. What happened to Luke, Leia, Han, Chewbacca, and the rest of our favorite characters? What's the galaxy like now that the Empire has been (apparently) defeated? Will Billy Dee Williams return as the legendary Lando Calrissian?

That last one may have been more of a personal line of inquiry, but how could it matter, given the stakes? Not only was this movie following the largely panned prequel films, which lacked in substance and development what they possessed in special effects, there was also enormous hype surrounding the production in the form of a talented director in J.J. Abrams, a promising cast featuring old-timers and young guns alike, and captivating trailers.

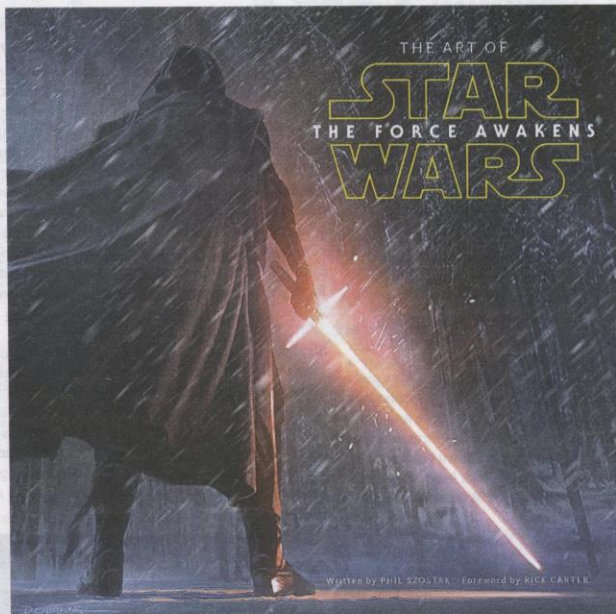
In the days and weeks leading up to the film's premiere, I walked

around saying that I expected it to deliver on all accounts. But on the inside, I was nervous. Could it ever live up to the glory of the trench run or the lightsaber fight on Bespin or the classic father-son reveal, all iconic moments from the classic earlier films?

I was pleased to find out that it indeed could.

Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens is a delightful, wonderful, fantastic addition to the Star Wars mythos that delivers on all accounts, in many ways better than anyone thought would be possible. J.J. Abrams has made a film that will captivate both casual enjoyers and hardcore fans everywhere. The Force is strong in Abrams indeed.

The plot concerns two new main heroes Finn (John Boyega), a deserting Stormtrooper, and Rey (Daisy Ridley), a scavenger, in their search to join the Resistance and its efforts to combat the First Order led by the nefarious Kylo Ren (Adam Driver). The story of the movie may seem perhaps a tad familiar (no spoilers), but instead of ignoring the familiar structure, the



movie embraces it wholeheartedly in telling a classically archetypal story of heroism in the face of adversity, a tale of good vs. evil.

The characters, new and old, are all exceptional. Boyega and Ridley shine as the new heroes, as does Oscar Isaac as Poe Dameron, a Resistance fighter pilot. Harrison Ford stands out among the returning characters as he makes a brilliant return as Han Solo, updated him to reflect an older, wiser Han while still staying true to the core of the original character. The show stealer, however, is Adam Driver as Kylo Ren, who perfectly embodies a three-dimensional villain in his struggle to resist the call of the light side while managing his temper and his veneration of Darth Vader.

Also notable is the sense of humor that the prequels lacked, returning in the form of witty banter and playful dialogue, especially in the interactions between the new and familiar characters.

The film is not without faults: a few characters, like Lupita Nyong'o's Maz Kanata and Gwendoline Christie's Captain Phasma have hardly enough screen time to justify their appearances, and at times feel tacked on. My biggest gripe with the movie is lack of back story: the landscape has changed since the destruction of the second Death Star, but we are frustratingly told very little about what has actually happened since then in our favorite galaxy far, far

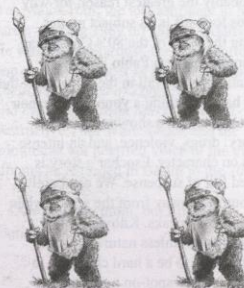
away.

The best thing about Awakens, however, is its timeless sense of fun and adventure. Where the prequels attempted to be serious and brooding while lacking the sophisticated structure and attitude needed to pull it off, Episode VII ventures to be everything that Star Wars represents. Thrilling space battles, bizarre alien creatures, mystical mentors, riveting action sequences, and of course lightsaber duels can all be found in abundance throughout its 135 minute runtime.

Star Wars: The Force Awakens is the comeback movie for the franchise: back and just as good as ever. I can't wait for what else is in store in the years to come.

Rating: 4/4

Order of films, ranked: *The Empire Strikes Back*, *A New Hope*, *The Force Awakens*, *Return of the Jedi*, *Revenge of the Sith*, *The Phantom Menace*, *Attack of the Clones*



Capizzi's Corner: The Year in Review

By Jack Capizzi
Frenchman Extraordinaire

I hereby present a series of awards dedicated to the past year in entertainment, stripped of the pomp and frizz of countless boring award shows.

Most Up-to-the-Hype Movie: *The Hateful Eight*

The eighth film from Quentin Tarantino shows no letup in his trademark quality and style. For three glorious hours, *The Hateful Eight* demonstrates Tarantino's masterful ability to take an entirely different angle on the mentality of a bounty hunter in the Old West.

What makes the film so great is its plot. It sets up the isolation of eight distinctly different characters in one place and then lets chaos unfold. Alliances form, tensions rise, conspiracies are thrown around, and inevitably, all hell breaks loose. It's like a much more violent, Western *And Then*

There Were None.

For me, there are three factors that define *The Hateful Eight*'s standing as one of the best films of the year. First, the scenery is fantastic. The duality of nature in the West is presented perfectly. The panning shots of the desolate mountains are simply beautiful, but also seem to bear down on the characters like the bars of a cage. Secondly, the soundtrack is outstanding. The sharp beats and high crescendos sound like something out of a classic thriller, perfectly reflecting the tension of what's going on in each scene. But the most stand-out feature of *The Hateful Eight* is the dialogue. Reminiscent of *Reservoir Dogs*, the quick wit, combined with the lengthy but powerful monologues, takes Tarantino's classic style to a whole new level.

The Hateful Eight is like the MBA Dining Hall of Tarantino films. It is the newest edition, equipped with some choice elements of production that make it stand out. After fulfilling the high expectations that now come with any Tarantino film, *The Hateful Eight* will have no trouble securing recognition as one of the renowned director's greatest accomplishments.

Straight-Up Coolest Movie: *The Revenant*

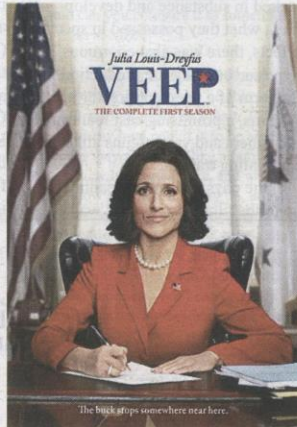
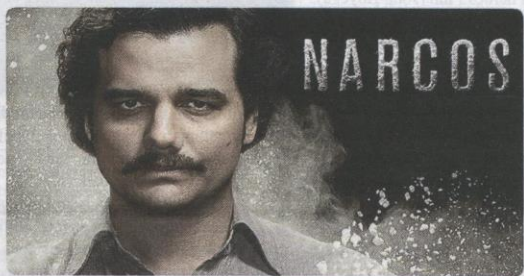
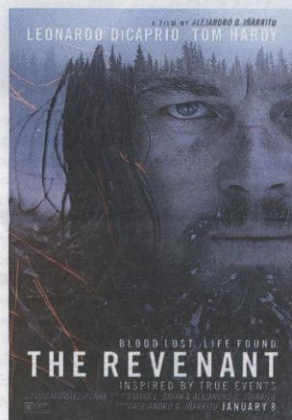
As one of the most acclaimed movies of the past year, *The Revenant* truly earned all of its hype. The film depicts the legendary tale of Hugh Glass, a frontiersman in the early 1800s who seemingly comes back to life after being brutally mauled by a bear.

Director Alexander Iñárritu's first film since his Best-Picture-winning *Birdman*, *The Revenant* takes the viewer through the hardship and paranoia that ran wild throughout the Western territories in the 1800s. The sweeping shots of the snow-covered valleys and the mountain-top views of the horizon instill a fear of the unknown and establish a

hopelessness that creepily shadows every asset of the movie.

Although there is minimal dialogue, the cast's overall acting is near-perfect. While Leonardo DiCaprio is able to show the grit and determination of Hugh Glass that could very well win him his first Oscar, the characters around him achieve even more, with Tom Hardy standing out among the bunch. The former *Batman* and *Mad Max* star displays his versatility by portraying and intensely contentious fur trapper hellbent on achieving his own safety and comfort even at the expense of others.

Ultimately, what truly puts *The Revenant* into my pantheon of films is its ability to evoke feeling from the audience. The sense of despair when Glass is crawling around for miles, unable to stand, or the relief felt whenever we catch a glimpse of civilization, is unforgettable. A film as beautiful as it is grotesque, *The Revenant* was by far one of the most outstanding films released this past year.



Most Binge-worthy TV show: *Narcos*

The perfect formula for a so-called "binge-worthy" show is its accessibility, its intrigue, and how well it can take hold of its audience. *Narcos* exceeds in all three categories.

Narcos premiered in August of 2015 and quickly became one of Netflix's most watched and most popular shows. Given how large an influence Netflix now has over the lives of so many young students like us, for a show to command that audience means it is definitely doing something right.

Probably the greatest reason for why *Narcos* took off is its subject matter. Telling the story of the 80's Colombian cocaine cartel king Pablo Escobar's dramatic rise and fall in the drug trade, the story has everything a young Gentleman might want from a show in the 21st century: drugs, violence, and an intense focus on character. Escobar's story is packed full of suspense. We can barely turn our eyes away from the screen when his character speaks. Known for his violence and ruthless nature, Escobar at first seems to be a hard character to root for. Yet the spot-on performance of Wagner Moura forces the audience to sympathize with the man at critical

moments. The ability for *Narcos* to make someone watching it have such mixed emotions towards the characters and situations is just one more reason for why it is hard to stay away from, making it truly the most "bingeable" show of 2015.

Funniest Show: *Veep*

Having completed its 4th season, *Veep* may have staked its claim as the best comedy on TV.

What makes the show stand out is its witty humor and topical point of view. The show follows "Veep," Selina Meyer, played by former *Seinfeld* cast member Julia Louis-Dreyfus, and her staff as they deal with scandals, press events, and elections.

What has made the show so hilarious is how well the characters are portrayed by the phenomenal cast. With each character so defined, after just a few episodes you feel like you have known them for years. By far the best character on the show is the "bag man" Gary, played by *Arrested Development* star Tony Hale. His unbearable awkwardness (coupled with his ridiculous job of holding a bag for the Vice President) makes him funniest member of the ensemble—indeed one of the funniest characters on TV. And he is just one of the great characters that makes the show so consistently exceptional.

Veep has had such a strong run since 2012, it's hard to believe the award-winning show will be slowing down anytime soon. There is a lot to look forward to from *Veep* in the coming years.

Most Memorable Song of 2015: "Hotline Bling," by Drake

Let me make this clear: this is not an award for the best song of 2015. You could argue over what the best song of the year was for hours with no conclusion. The most memorable song is a more select category, and for this year, there is no song

more memorable than Drake's "Hotline Bling." Whether you sung to it, despised it, laughed at it, or saw any of its many parodies, you knew upon hearing it that "Hotline Bling" was one for the ages.

Drake, the most popular rapper in the world, gave us a song in which he doesn't rap once. His repetitive lyrics placed over the ringtone-like beat are somewhat monotonous, but when examined closely, reveal a stronger meaning. In just a few words, Drake expresses his feelings about how fame has drawn him away from his old life.

"Hotline Bling" got a significant amount of boost in popularity from its music video. The video's different shots of Drake dancing around inside of different illuminated shapes spurned hundreds of parodies. These included the portrayal of Drake as a Jedi and a pizza chef, using the video for an SNL skit featuring Donald Trump, and as of last Wednesday, a PSA from the Philadelphia police.

"Hotline Bling" was uniquely memorable due to the impact it had on pop culture in 2015, whether it was the song's major effect on social media, its inclusion in the ongoing presidential election, or its overall titanic popularity.

Grammys are Set to Impress

By Hamilton Garber
Staff Infection

As with every year, this February 15th, musical fans of all kinds will gather to watch the annual Grammys. This year marks the 58th presentation of the Awards since 1959. Commonly accepted as the most prestigious music award show for both contemporary and legendary artists, the Grammys has become the traditional way to send off the past year by remembering the very best in music. The nominations and performers have already been set. Let's consider what to watch for this year.

This year boasts some very talented acts for performers at the show. Only four performers have been announced as of January 20, but *Billboard* promises more in the near future. Kendrick Lamar, nominated for a whopping 11 awards, will perform for the second time since his debut performance in 2014. Another notable performance will come from the Weeknd, playing the Grammys for the first time. On the country side of the spectrum comes Little Big Town, and having seen them live twice, I can honestly say their music will bring a smile to the collective faces of the audience. Last but certainly not least will be Adele who, despite her record smashing release, "25", is not eligible for any Grammys this year due to the release date of her latest album. You Adele fans can rest assured though, knowing that she will perform at this year's spectacle in preparation for next year's probable Adele-filled Grammys. There have also been rumors circulating that Canadian child star-

turned-rapper Drake will show up to perform two of his smash hits, "Hotline Bling" and "Back to Back." Another popular request will be Taylor Swift, as her 1989 Album Tour turned heads with the outstanding reviews, as did her live shows. Regardless of what the final cut ends up being, there are certainly plenty of extravagant acts to satisfy your musical tastes.

Next comes the meat of the show, the awards. Unfortunately, there are too many individual awards to name, so I stuck to the Grammy's "Big Three."

Hamilton's 2016 Predictions

The Award: Album of the Year

The Nominees:

- Alabama Shakes, *Sound + Color*
- D'Angelo & The Vanguard, *Black Messiah*
- Foo Fighters, *Sonic Highways*
- Hamilton Cast, *Original Broadway Cast Recording*
- Carly Rae Jepsen, *Emotion*
- Kendrick Lamar, *To Pimp a Butterfly*
- Taylor Swift, *1989*
- The Weeknd, *Beauty Behind the Madness*

Hamilton's Pick: Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp a Butterfly*

Despite its mixed reviews upon release, more and more people have come to appreciate *To Pimp a Butterfly* for its true artistic genius. As a bold return to what the original pioneers of rap envisioned, this work is more than deserving of such a high honor.

The Award: Record of the Year

The Nominees:

- "Blank Space," Taylor Swift
- "Can't Feel My Face," The Weeknd
- "Cheerleader," OMI
- "Girl Crush," Little Big Town
- "Shut Up And Dance," Walk the Moon
- "Take Your Time," Sam Hunt
- "Thinking Out Loud," Ed Sheeran
- "Uptown Funk," Mark Ronson Feat. Bruno Mars
- "Want to Want Me," Jason Derulo
- "Where Are U Now," Justin Bieber with Skrillex and Diplo

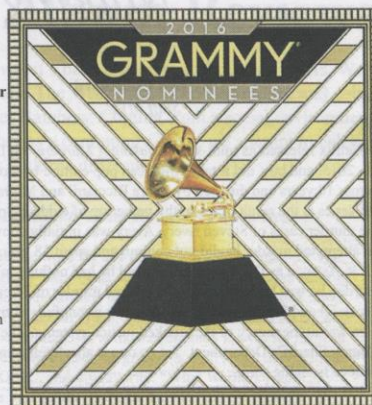
Hamilton's Pick: Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' "Uptown Funk."

Although many are calling for Taylor Swift's "Blank Space" to champion this spot, I would like to see "Uptown Funk" get its due justice. Though I have to come to hate how much I enjoyed this song, I couldn't help but keep it on whenever it would come on the radio. This one was a true 2015 jam.

The Award: Song of the Year

The Nominees:

- "Blank Space" Taylor Swift
- "Fight Song" Rachel Platten
- "FourFiveSeconds" Rihanna, Kanye West, Paul McCartney
- "Girl Crush" Little Big Town
- "Glory" John Legend



- "Honey, I'm Good" Andy Grammer
- "Thinking Out Loud" Ed Sheeran
- "Til It Happens To You" Lady Gaga
- "Uptown Funk" Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars

Hamilton's Pick: "FourFiveSeconds" by Rihanna, Kanye West, and Paul McCartney

Kanye is a Grammy magnet, winning 21 times out of a total of 58 nominations. With as talented a singer as Rihanna and the beloved Beatle Paul McCartney on the roster, I believe this song takes the cake for the most talent collected in one single this year.

Put On Your Red Shoes and Dance the Blues

By Mac Roberts
The New Man

David Bowie died on January 10, 2016 and I have to admit that before he died, I knew almost nothing about him. Yet as soon as news broke about his death, my mom started talking to me about his career, and I came to feel as though I needed an education in his section of musical history. And every time my mom decides to lecture me on something, I have no choice but to sit down and just listen.

So began my education of Ziggy Stardust and all of the other characters Bowie created. Each character felt a little over the top and seemed to be a different alter ego. The music all seems pretty cool, but the costumes and drug-addled states made him seem even more foreign to me than he already was. The more I listened to the music, though, the more I liked what I was hearing. I was surprised to find that he was the performer of the famous "Major Tom" song ("Space Oddity," from the album of the same name) that was used in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, one of my favorite movies. This revelation led me to dive deeper into Bowie's body of work, and I began searching online for different songs, music videos, and lives performances.

Bowie's 1983 album, *Let's Dance*, was one of his more commercially successful albums. He had given up drugs and his

over-the-top alter egos and found new inspiration from the American Motown sound. In a 1995 interview with MTV News, Bowie said that he had come to America in the late 70's and spent a lot of

Motown influence. Bowie pays homage to the inspiring genre on "Let's Dance," the best track on the album, with the classic line "Put on your red shoes and dance the blues." The album also features Texas

pop. Overall, it's a tremendous album, and I would recommend listening to "Let's Dance" and "Modern Love" to any Bowie novice.

Ultimately, David Bowie is someone today's teenager should definitely look into. There is a reason he is such a well-respected artist and icon. While some of the music doesn't resonate with me since I wasn't alive in the 70s and 80s and did not get the chance to experience Bowie in real time, simply based on his artistic ability, some Bowie purchases are warranted.

In its obituary, the *New York Times* said, "Mr. Bowie was a person of relentless reinvention. He emerged in the late 1960s with the voice of a rock belter but with the sensibility of a cabaret singer, steeped in the dynamics of stage musicals. He was Major Tom, the lost astronaut in his career-making 1969 hit "Space Oddity." He was Ziggy Stardust, the otherworldly pop star at the center of his 1972 album, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*... the self-destructive Thin White Duke, and the minimalist but heartfelt voice of the three albums he recorded in Berlin in the 70s."

Don't tell my mom, but I'm glad I found out.



time enthralled by Motown culture. On *Let's Dance*, "Modern Love," one of the singles, an upbeat pop song that includes a loud horn section, reflects the prominent

blues artist Stevie Ray Vaughn (someone my dad says I need to also learn about), giving it a more solid blues and R&B sound while still coming off slick and

Making a Murderer: Whodunnit?

By Ben Coulthard
Staff MVP

Netflix released its mini-series *Making a Murderer* on December 18, 2015, and boy, did it take American pop culture by storm. Filmed across 10 years and directed by Laura Ricciardi and Moira Demos, the series is the result of a lengthy gathering of evidence regarding the murder cases of Steven Avery. Avery was initially convicted of an attempted murder he did not commit and spent 18 years in prison for it. As soon as DNA evidence proved he had nothing to do with the murder, he was back in jail for the alleged murder of Teresa Halbach. Ricciardi and Demos portray Avery as the wrongfully convicted man who was at the mercy of the crooked justice system of the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Department. Yet no one is absolutely sure what to believe from the series.

3 Things to take from the series:

1. Some justice systems can't be trusted

Nearly every piece of evidence the Manitowoc County defense used to prove Avery murdered Halbach was faulty or inaccurate. I really have a hard time believing the jury wasn't truly bribed or thrown in one way by the state. The man accused of the first murder allegedly had underwear. The people in the documentary said anyone who knew anything about the Avery family knew Steven didn't even own underwear. Also, the point of having trials is to prove the suspect's innocence. All suspects are supposed to be believed innocent. It was clear everyone in the jury and the judge himself were against Avery from the beginning. And the key? How could multiple days go by having searched the tiny house 3. where Avery lived, when Andy Colburn, the guy Avery was suing, just happens to find the key to Halbach's car sitting in plain view? How could he not have planted it? And don't get me started on Ken Kratz. I mean, come on, who could trust a guy who was later found guilty of a sexting scandal? Besides, you can never trust a man who can't grow a good 'stache.

2. Jerry Buting and Dean Strang are awesome

How could you not like a team of a guy who could be David Wallace from *The Office* and the other who looks like Stephen Colbert? These guys deserve awards just based on how they dress, let alone how well



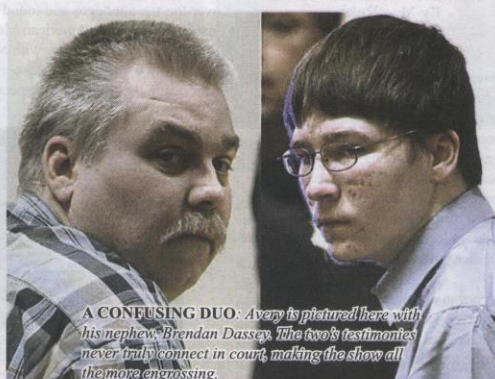
they argued in Avery's favor. These two were the reason Avery almost won, and in my opinion should have won, the case. Lawyers don't normally try to help as much as Strang and Buting did. (Case in point: Len Kachinsky, the lawyer who ruined Avery's nephew, Brendan Dassey's life). Strang and Buting even mention how they always take the longer, harder route of a case, because most times it ends up in a victory for their client. They fought against all the odds Manitowoc County tried to throw up in their way, they were genuinely interested in Steven and his well-being, and they committed themselves to his case.

We are still not sure whether Steven Avery killed Teresa Halbach

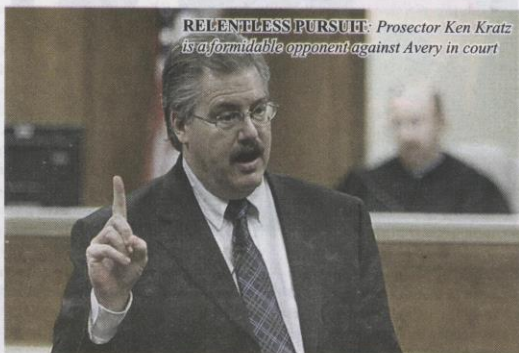
I just don't feel like the evidence adds up. Literally every piece of evidence the state piled up against Steven was dubious. One of their officers, Andy Colburn, didn't sign the sheet to make sure he was accounted for on the property, and just after this event occurred, BAM, Teresa's car is found in the Avery Auto Salvage. A viewer gets the sense that Colburn had more to do with framing Steven Avery than anyone. He's the one that happens to find the key to Teresa's RAV4. He's the guy being sued by Steven. It all adds up: he has a motive to frame Steven for the murder. But if Steven didn't kill Teresa, then who did? No other suspect can really be found. The documentary also leaves out key points of evidence against Steven. Kratz told of how when Halbach showed up at the Avery house to take photos of their car for sale, Steven showed up in nothing but a towel. Creepy. I think there is evidence out there that points to both sides. Ultimately, whether Steven Avery is guilty or not is up to the justice system.



DYNAMIC DUO: Jerry Buting and Dean Strang are arguably the show's most compelling characters, as they never give up on Avery's case.



A CONFUSING DUO: Avery is pictured here with his nephew Brendan Dassey. The two's testimonies never truly connect in court, making the show all the more engrossing.



RELENTLESS PURSUIT: Prosecutor Ken Kratz is an formidable opponent against Avery in court.

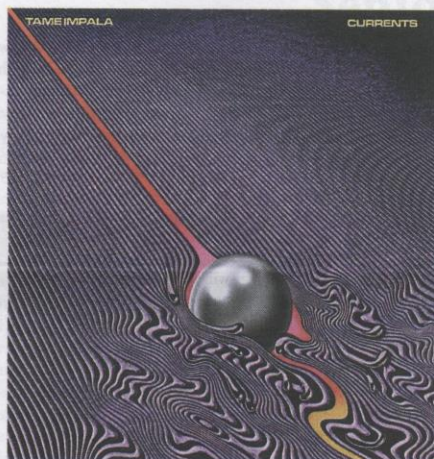
Glover and Friends: The Winter Album Reviews

From Tame Impala's hypnotic *Currents* to the dreamy romancing of Kurt Vile's *b'lieve I'm goin down*, it's been a good year for music lovers. We've discovered the lyrical genius of Kendrick Lamar, lamented the mind-numbing horror of Fetty Wap and The Weekend on constant repeat, and delved into the psychedelic dreamscape with innovative groups such as Panda Bear and Black Moth Super Rainbow. Coming from a social environment where labels divide us, whether it is nerd, hipster, or jock, music is a thing that binds all of us together as a community. Here, we attempt to celebrate that diversity of tastes and ideas through a wide range of perspectives across multiple different genres.

Currents - Tame Impala

It is no surprise that the winner of ARIA's "Album of the Year" award is one of our best albums of the year. With the release of Tame Impala's *Currents* in July of 2015, minds across the world were blown as the Australian band broke new ground in the modern psychedelic pop realm. Taking three years to perfect this album, these musical pioneers have collectively reinvented their style. If you were not into Tame Impala's mellow, wavy sound previously exhibited in both *Innerspeaker* and *Lonerism*, then you might want to give this one a listen. In *Currents*, Tame Impala introduces a new upbeat, emotional, and more electronic sound that enables anyone that appreciates music to think "how'd they do that?" Lyrically speaking, *Currents* beats any of Tame Impala's previous albums, as the meanings of most of the songs fall under the category of "taking advantage of the time you have" and "finding yourself."

Review by Bryce Ardisson



Sometimes I Sit and Think, and Sometimes I Just Sit- Courtney Barnett

For the uninitiated, Barnett blends basic, indie- garage band instrumentation with rambling, monotone vocals. To believers, she is a breath of fresh air for an art form that's been overly produced, synthesized, and remixed. Barnett stays grounded and in touch with her Earthy and adorably amateurish origins. The result is simultaneously a homebody's anthem, a chronicle of compulsion, and a dream machine for drowning out the noise. Despite the success of her freshman EP: *A Sea of Split Peas*, Barnett has managed to rise above the expectations by staying true to her unique style. Filled with detailed descriptions of everyday activities and insightful self-reflection, Barnett's moody, conversational lyrics are dark and resentful but also witty and reassuring. This album will have you tapping your foot to the rhythm while also shaking your head in exasperation. She'll have you in the palm of her hand.

Review by John Glover



Panda Bear Meets Grim Reaper - Panda Bear

If I had to think of one word for this album, it would be ethereal. The set, consisting of trance-like vocals accompanied with excerpts ranging from dog moans to Tchaikovsky, is a trip through the expansive mind of Noah Lennox. Yes, in "Mr Noah," there are dog moans. Panda Bear is no stranger to experiment. He is most commonly known for his lead role in Animal Collective. They've graced us with songs like "Penny Dreadfuls", "My Girls", and my favorite: "What Would I Want? Sky".

The strange titles parallel the psychedelic vibe that characterizes the group. Panda Bear incorporates the similar a cappella with dilated vowels; consequently, the spacey lyrics overshadowed by the aesthetic groove are sometimes lost. In others, Panda Bear was coherently able to channel words with musicality creating a lucid, far-out dream. He manifests his potential through the masterpiece "Tropic of Cancer" while delivering the pain of his father's cancer diagnosis (maybe the Grim Reaper?). Combining this pain with creativity, Panda Bear creates a sublime album with an undertone of change or adieu to the past. The music videos and instrumentals prove psychoactive emotions inspired much of the album.

These feelings intensify the ethereal set into transcendence.

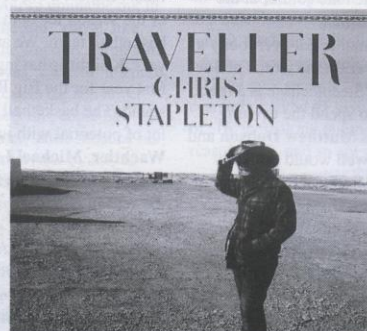
Review by John Whitaker



Traveller - Chris Stapleton

Traveller, like the man who created it, is not the typical album. Even though Chris Stapleton has both a rough voice and appearance, he mixes strong emotions of love, loss, and loneliness that parallel his soft-spoken personality. It is Stapleton's first album; however, he is no where near being a novice to the country music scene as he has written many famous songs including "Drink a Beer" by Luke Bryan, "Crash and Burn" by Thomas Rhett, and "Come Back Song" by Darrius Rucker. Stapleton does not go unnoticed at award ceremonies. At the CMAs, he rightfully won Best Album of the Year, New Artist of the Year, Male Vocalist of the Year, and Breakout Artist of the Year for his masterpiece, and is nominated at the Grammy's for Best Album of the Year, Best Country Album of the Year, Best Country Solo Performance, and Best Country Song for his song "Traveller."

Review by Adam Young



Sophomores Grow Taller, Gain Confidence

By Ty Allen and Philip Scholer
As Consistent as Ever

The sophomores have gotten off to a great start this second semester. A large topic to start off the new year has been sports. Ultimate Frisbee, which IS considered a sport, has attracted the largest number of sophomore participants. While some think these athletes are just being lazy and choosing not to do a real sport, these ultimate players are dedicated to improving their skills while also competing at a high level. **Charlie Ma** and **Jack Sullivan** are tearing it up on the A-Team. The Varsity basketball team, containing four sophomores, is improving every game. Although **Will Nutter** is 1 for 25 on three pointers, he is still a strong contributor. The lacrosse workouts have apparently been extremely hard, or at least that's what **Cal Bryan** says every. single. day.

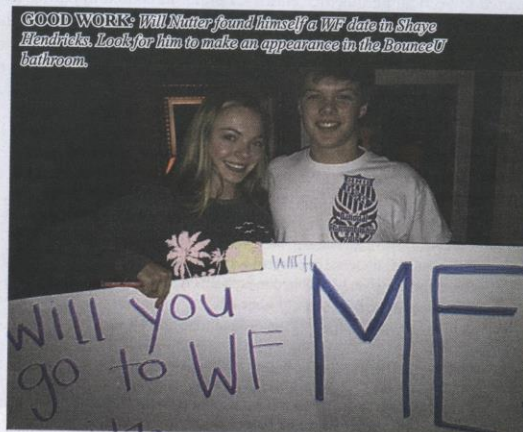
The only thing worse than the lacrosse running is listening to **Cal** complain about it. In case you were wondering, **Fenner**, **Gordon**, and **Jabby** all went to a LACROSSE SHOWCASE. **Fenner** and **Gordon** got some "serious looks." **Jackson Ab-bey**, with a "torn hamstring," is really

trying hard to focus on academics this season. He says, "Just like the ocean tide, my chances of getting a Harvard acceptance letter continues to rise." But as we all know, *the tide rises, the tide falls.*

In other news, the research paper is making people sweat. It may have seemed to be a bit unwieldy at first, but the paper has proved to be better than expected, mainly because the homework for the past several nights has been to "read" our outside reading books. In addition to learning all about our research paper authors, we also found that **Ben Frigon** has some important stuff on his phone.

We would like to officially welcome **James Harris** to our grade. A lot of American girls think that variety is the spice of life and there aren't many MBA guys from Asia, so we're confident he is going to do well.

Winter Formal is approaching quickly, and **William Kinard** is especially excited for his evening, as it will be all "fun and games." Although **Blake Roberson's** tooth got chipped, it does not seem to have affected his game with the ladies who are "high" up on every guy's chart, being asked to the Harpeth Hall and Saint Cecilia



GOOD WORK: Will Nutter found himself a WF date in Shayne Hendricks. Look for him to make an appearance in the BounceU bathroom.

winter formals. Speaking of Saint Cecilia, the class stud, **Palmer Thombs**, will be put in an awkward situation Winter Formal night. Not only will he be with his current girlfriend, but he will also be riding with his former girlfriend, accompanied by **Wes Hall**. Wes said, "My goal is to make the inevitable awkward silences even more awkward for Palmer." Just goes to show that being a lady-killer isn't always a good thing.

Juniors Love Pump It Up

By Frist Allen
Highland Park Extraordinaire

Winter is the best season of the year. Not only because it is the holiday season, but because it is time for the junior class to show out at Winter Formal. Many men have struggled to find that one special date. That obviously does not seem to be the case for social gods like **Jack Pickel**, **Will Hoffman**, and, of course **Michael Lee**, who landed two different dates at two different schools. Most juniors will attend Harpeth Hall or Ensworth Winter Formals, while **Logan Cashwell** looks to be the lone soldier at the SCA winter formal.

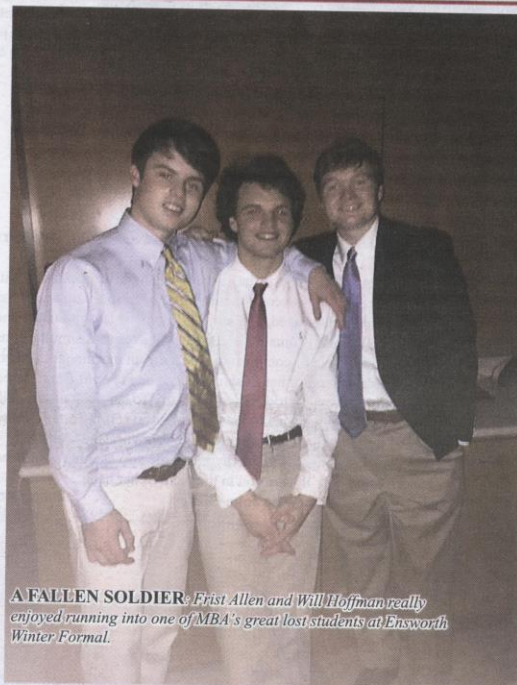
Winter Formal is not everybody's scene, however. In the words of **Joe McMahon**, "Steeplechase is a much better place to spend the evening." Franklin boys **Matthew Dobson** and **Logan Cashwell** would probably prefer spending their Saturday night milking cows and riding four-wheelers, and **Hudson Dobbs** loves his time with his camera on the tennis court.

In other parts, the juniors have

been dominating the sports world. **Nick Ray** has been a beast out on the ice despite his partner in crime **Stephen** not being out there with him. He's pretty sad about that. **Jacob Kovick**, **Ellis Moore**, **Jake Evans** and the rest of the crew have led their team to a historic season, which hopefully will lead to consecutive trips to the state championship. **Perry Matthews** has been grinding all season on the mat while the **Elkins** have missed some time due to "car malfunction."

After an overtime loss to Baylor, **Jarrett Knight** reassured his fans: "Expect a big second half of the season for both me and the basketball team. We aren't done yet." **Knight** is having a great first year for the Big Red varsity squad. The basketball team has a lot of potential with juniors **Haden Wachtler**, **Michael Lee**, and **Jackson Owen** all in full gear to end the season strong.

Winter sports are gradually coming to a close, and spring sports are slowly approaching. **William Porter** (soccer), **George Harwell**



A FALLEN SOLDIER: Frist Allen and Will Hoffman really enjoyed running into one of MBA's great lost students at Ensworth Winter Formal.

(tennis), **Jack Hayles** (lax), and **Drew Martin** (baseball) are some junior standouts that have been working all year for this spring season. Good luck to all of them and their teams! Stay Dixie, juniors!

Freshmen News, or Lack Thereof

By Sam Funk and Garret Murphy
Big Fans of Themselves

The ninth grade class is taking second semester in stride. After rebounding from the Latin and Geometry exams, the class is ready to try not to fail. Though many grades have been dropping due to a lack of Membean activity, Membean monster **Atticus Glen** is still grinding.

Through the leadership of the Love Doctor **Cole Turner**, the FPC church ball team is winning every game. Controversy arose, however, the team was discovered to be playing in the middle school division, easily securing wins over microbes. Captain Turner could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, with swimming regionals approaching fast, we know **Marshall Summer**, **Jackson Lyell**, and **Will Nahley** will absolutely love shaving their legs.

In other news, we really do believe that **Jackson Lampley** deserves a round of applause for securing a Winter Formal date a month before break. I'm sure that the speed at which he wooed his fine lady will inspire many of 9th graders to step up their game. Speaking of Winter Formal, it is well known that many boys were excited not to be at a group dinner with sloppy joes and mac and cheese, but Harpeth Hall's adoption of an all-inclusive dinner did raise some eyebrows. Many were spotted desperately adding new

friends on Snapchat, or even "sledding" into girls' DM's, as they say.

On the sporting front, while the freshman basketball team may be struggling to gain their footing, we are confident that they will make a late-season run. The important thing to remember is that everybody makes the tournament so our boys will get to keep playing. After some deliberation, people have realized that **Sam Funk** needs to return as basketball manager to help the team regain a jump in their step. After a long offseason, **Sam** has finally figured out how to keep the books and how to work the scoreboard. Behind "the Luck of the Irish," **Ross Johnson** will catch fire and become the next Andy Dalton. And hopefully, **Wil-**

liam "Squilliam" Wheeler will keep sliding around the court and going all out. With the new "Round-Mound of Rebound" **Harrison Taylor**, the team is on its way to becoming a threat in every facet of the game.

Speaking of winter sports, the MBA hockey team is shredding some ice. With a great season underway, Coach Deutsch deserves quite the fist bump and a pat on the head. Hopefully the Ice Pups, under **Nick Nola's** leadership, will skate right into a championship. With the third quarter dragging on, we trust such stellar sporting will rejuvenate these scholars.

Seniors Hunt for Bids

By Nolan Spear and Werner Bradshaw
BMOC's

Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen. Times are shifting. I can feel it in the air. Can you? First semester has ended, and the slide has begun.

Things remain weird in the halls. **Matt Remke** really makes **Alec Whitson** and **Winston Hewett** laugh in HammyLand. **Drew Gordon** and **Alex Stevens** continue to set new standards for positive attitudes by refusing to play the assassin game. **Drew** really established himself as a team player with the statement, "I refuse to play your stupid games." Nice, man.

In other news, **Winston Hewett** and **Glenn Coleman** have recently decided to establish a new fashion trend on the Hill - wearing footie pajamas. Both are very, very excited about wearing their 'jammies around. **Glenn** was said to be so excited that

he almost ordered two pairs. But if you ask me, it's unlikely that **Winston** will be able to remain in his 'jammies for very long, because if you know **Winston**, you know that's there are few things more H than **Winston** in a onesie.

On a different note, everyone please pray for **Harrison Wachtler**. We at *The Bell Ringer* have been studying him closely and have concluded that he has been struck with a mysterious ocular illness. We know this to be true because there is simply no other explanation for the constant presence of his surely-necessary headwear. Wearing his hat all the time as a measure of protection against the fluorescent lights in Herr Dougherty's classroom is absolutely allowed by the MBA Handbook. It has no connection to the upkeep of **Harrison's** hair at all.

Oh, and just in case you all are wondering, **Jordan Wilson** DID take a visit to UCLA a few weeks ago, where he has committed to play football. #4sUp.

As winter continues on, many bear-like creatures will begin to emerge from hibernation. *The Bell Ringer's* wilderness insider (and, unfortunately, political columnist) **Mark Floyd** has reported that the class of 2016's favorite bear will soon emerge from hibernation. The identity of the bear is unknown, but in totally unrelated news, **John Kelly** is looking forward to ending his high school wrestling career on a high note.

With prom season in the near future, we decided to consult the senior class fashion correspondent **Russell**

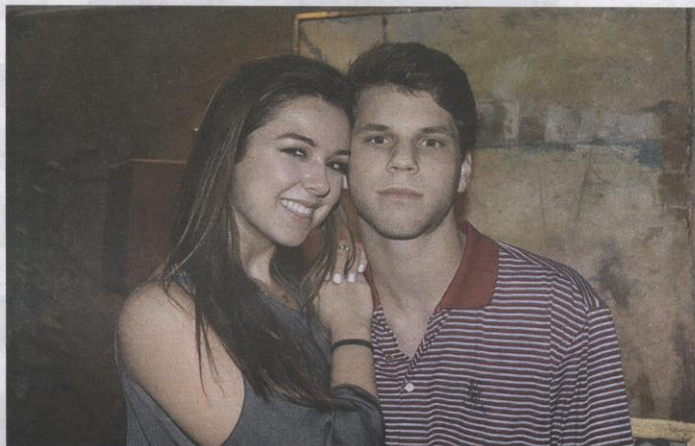
McGinn regarding the do's and don'ts of prom dress. In typical **Rusty** fashion, his response was short: "You just gotta wear glasses if you're gonna be out in the sun, 'cause, like, the sun may get in your eyes... even if it's dark, 'cause the sun never sets on people like me." **Russ** finished his interview by asking us if we wanted to get some Ninki.

The start of the Assassin Game saw a profusion of passion-fueled acts of courage, bravery, and resilience.

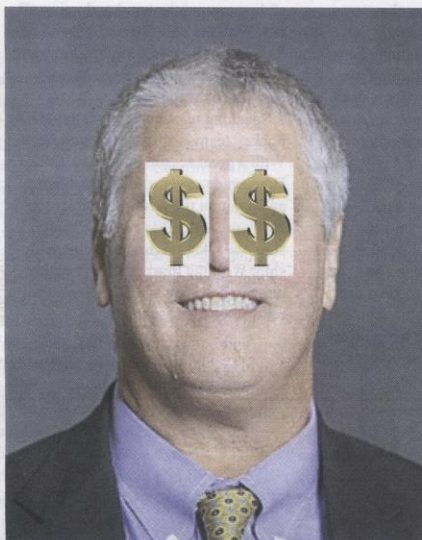


Men of Character emerged left and right, and we're almost positive that Colonel Sharbel starting weeping. The game has led to many high profile yet unspoken "beefs," but none more notable than the conflict involving **Alvin Zhang** and **Jack King**. **Alvin** had been lying low for a while, but his ruthless annihilation of **Jack** in the quad at approximately 2:23 pm on January 19 sparked massive beef. In a quiet interview in his car before school, **Jack** let us know that the beef has since been resolved.

Good luck seniors. **Yavin Alwis**, currently ranked #1 savage in the class of '16, is freaking pumped for no reason at all, and so are we.



Where Does Your Tuition Really Go?



Here on the Hill, there are all sorts of areas that require upkeep. Teachers must be paid, heat and air conditioning must flow through our buildings, and Sage buffet lines must be available at a moment's notice. While these occurrences may seem obvious to any first-time visitor to MBA, however, there are many other parts of our daily lives that require monetary investment. And that's where our tuition comes in. So in this issue, we here at *The Bell Ringer* delve into some of the finer areas of campus life where the administration applies your parents' money.

1. Flavored Water Development

Of all of our culinary investments, this fine science may take the cake. It is always very reassuring to us here on the staff to know that our money is being spent on the development of such deliciously random waters. We hope that in the future, more money will be invested into the development of Sage Scented Waters®, including flavors such as "Odor of the Lowry Building," and "Scent of a Chemistry Lab."

2. A Blowtorch

Salt? We've never heard of it! This glorious investment first made waves last February when an intense amount of ice remained on campus following a snowstorm. And rather than allow salt to work its way through the ice



(and likely awarding the Big Red one or two more well-deserved days off), our friends in the Ball Building decided to go all out and melt the ice with the blowtorch. "Is this real life?" was likely the first thought that came to anyone's mind when they saw a picture of this glorious device, and we here on staff agree. Because when one dislikes snow (and general student happiness) that much, doesn't it make perfect sense to purchase a blowtorch to combat it?

3. An Innovation Room

What a venture. So many whiteboards, so many chairs, so much opportunity for innovation. Perfect for student council "meetings" or athletic office "discussions." Oh, and keeping it locked during 75% of the day makes it all the more innovative.

4. Revolutionary War Cannons

The perfect addition to any quadrangle. Two large cannons that serve not only to display our rousing masculinity, but also as a venue on which squirrels freeze to death on particularly icy days. There's nothing quite like walking out of Coach Pruitt's lab on a cold Tuesday morning and witnessing the glowing color of lead on those cannons. What a sight to behold.

5. Long Mountain

Is it an observatory, or maybe something more? Is it true that Sam Davis is still alive and living the telescope? There are many questions surrounding this foggy land of wonders. Some we may yet learn the answers to, others we afraid we may never know.

6. Bagpipes at Graduation

There's nothing quite like a line of older gentlemen wearing kilts to remind the students of a Nashville-based high school of our esteemed Scottish tradition. We here at *The Bell Ringer* absolutely loved the bagpipe train, and honestly wish that they were present at every weekly assembly.

7. A microwave

Psyche!

